

## IUCN launches Behaviour Change Task Force

The loss of biodiversity is influenced by the choices we consciously make, individually and collectively, on a daily basis. Given the importance of this issue and the absence of an expert group focused on influencing human behaviour, the IUCN through its Commissions for Species Survival and Education and Communication created a Behaviour Change Task Force in May 2023. Details can be found at [behaviourchange.org.uk](https://behaviourchange.org.uk).

Although there is a long history in biodiversity conservation of trying to influence decision-making through environmental education, the social, communication and behavioural sciences have often been overlooked as tools for nature protection. The Behaviour Change Task Force will focus on distilling multidisciplinary evidence and providing specialist knowledge in support of the IUCN network and the conservation field more broadly. It aims to produce a series of guidance materials to disseminate best practices in the field of behaviour change for biodiversity conservation. The outputs of the Task Force will provide guidance to other interested groups, both within the IUCN network (such as Species Survival Commission species specialist groups) and beyond IUCN (such as the community of zoo and aquarium educators). More broadly, the Task Force aims to leverage the IUCN brand alongside its membership to increase the use of behavioural insights to advance the conservation and management of biodiversity.

The Behaviour Change Task Force will benefit from its members' varied backgrounds in behavioural, social and communication sciences. This gender-balanced group includes professionals from North and Latin America, Oceania, Africa, Europe and Asia. With expertise across fields such as psychology, social marketing, communications, economics, social marketing, behavioural public policy, environmental policy, education and design thinking, the Task Force aims to be transdisciplinary.

The main goal of the Task Force is to act as a knowledge broker between the behavioural sciences and those working to conserve biodiversity. To achieve that, this Task Force will: (1) maximize synergies between other institutional groups working in the field of behavioural science and sustainability, (2) conduct a consultation across the two Commissions and other relevant stakeholders to identify barriers to the use of behavioural change science in conservation, (3) publish guidelines for high quality behavioural interventions in the context of biodiversity conservation, (4) develop freely accessible training materials and modules to help build capacity across the IUCN and more broadly in biodiversity conservation, and (5) produce an authoritative open access review of the relevant knowledge in this field. The aim is to fulfill these goals by the next World Conservation Congress in 2025.

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## New toolkit for Nature-Positive Enterprise development

Fauna & Flora, the Endangered Landscapes Programme and the Cambridge Judge Business School have collaborated to develop the Practitioner's Toolkit for Nature-Positive Enterprises. Conservation practitioners do not generally have the technical expertise in business management to develop and maintain a successful enterprise. The purpose of this toolkit is to bridge this knowledge gap and enable practitioners to develop and effectively manage enterprises that support nature.

A nature-positive enterprise, as defined by the Endangered Landscapes Programme partners, is a financially viable business entity that sustainably derives value from natural and social capital in a landscape or seascape to attract and generate sustainable finance and positively contribute to nature conservation and restoration by ensuring local actors are equitably benefitted. Promoting nature-positive enterprises within conservation organizations can play an important role in developing additional income streams to finance conservation. Currently, the majority of conservation organizations receive funding mainly in the form of donations and grants, leaving them vulnerable to financing gaps when such forms of funding are not readily available. Diversifying income streams through nature-positive enterprises can allow conservation organizations to become more financially resilient and can fund long-term conservation programmes.

The toolkit was developed to guide practitioners through the various stages of developing a nature-positive enterprise. It begins by guiding the practitioner on how to assess business opportunities within their landscape or seascape, followed by a second chapter focused on the design of a business model. The third chapter covers the various intricacies of launching a business. In the fourth and final chapter the toolkit addresses long-term management and governance strategies that relate to nature-positive enterprises. Each chapter includes various case studies of successful nature-positive enterprises from 10 partner organizations. These case studies include examples of a range of enterprises commercializing products such as dairy, honey and fish. The toolkit has been translated into Russian, and has two add-ons that focus on where to source funding and how to develop strategic and commercial partnerships within landscapes.

The Practitioner's Toolkit for Nature-Positive Enterprises was launched on 14 June 2023 and is available at [endangeredlandscapes.org/resources](https://endangeredlandscapes.org/resources).

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## The Whitley Awards 2023

The UK-based charity Whitley Fund for Nature has announced the six conservation leaders receiving the Whitley Awards 2023. The Whitley Awards ceremony was held at the Royal Geographical Society and was also broadcast online.

The awards are worth GBP 40,000 each in project funding over 1 year in support of work across the Global South. The 2023 Whitley Award Winners are Leonard Akwany, Kenya (Saving native fish species of Lake Victoria, Kenya); Yuliana Bedolla, Mexico (Protecting nocturnal seabird species nesting sites in key Mexican Pacific islands); Serge Kamgang, Cameroon (Towards an integrated lion conservation approach in the Benue Ecosystem, Cameroon); Mamy Razafitsalama, Madagascar (Managing fires and monitoring fragmented forests in Ankarafantsika National Park in Madagascar); Albert Salemgareyev, Kazakhstan (Building trust in data: resolving saiga–pastoralist conflicts over water in West Kazakhstan); and Tulshi Suwal, Nepal (Conservation of the Critically Endangered Chinese pangolin and human livelihoods in central Nepal).

In addition, a Whitley Award alumnus is chosen to receive the Whitley Gold Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to conservation. Worth GBP 100,000, this top prize was presented to 2014 Whitley Award winner Shivani Bhalla of Ewaso Lions for her work on fostering human–carnivore coexistence through locally led programmes, helping to reverse a decline in lion populations in northern Kenya. Applying the PARTNERS Principles—distilled from decades of successful community collaborations developed by last year's Whitley Gold Award winner, Charu Mishra—she and her team will collaborate with the Ewaso community and conservation practitioners from across the globe to develop an open-source framework, laying out pathways for conservation practitioners to build skills within their teams to ensure that conservation decision-making happens locally.

To date, the charity has given GBP 20 million in conservation funding to more than 200 conservation leaders

in over 80 countries. The Whitley Award was one of the first awards given in recognition of grassroots conservation leadership in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Whitley Fund for Nature supports emerging country nationals working on the ground in regions where biodiversity is rich but resources for conservation are lacking. Projects are deeply rooted in community involvement and are pragmatic, science-based and impactful.

Whitley Fund for Nature has a long-term commitment to conservation leaders, and winners can apply for continuation funding grants worth up to GBP 100,000 over 2 years to further fund and scale up their work or respond to new threats. As part of this scheme, Whitley Fund for Nature supports nature-based solutions projects that directly address climate change and biodiversity loss in consultation with communities. Winners also gain a lifelong membership in the global alumni network, giving them access to like-minded leaders and opportunities to foster collaborations. Over half of Whitley Award winners go on to receive continuation funding. Whitley Fund for Nature is celebrating its 30th year of supporting grassroots leaders across the Global South.

For more information on the Whitley Awards or how to apply, visit [whitleyaward.org](https://whitleyaward.org).

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## Another Indonesian songbird on the brink of extinction: is it too late for the Kangean shama?

The cage-bird trade is one of the principal threats to songbird conservation in Asia. In Indonesia, where this threat is most acute, it has already driven several bird taxa to extinction in the wild and others to the brink of it. Among the most traded species, highly prized for its song, is the white-rumped shama *Copsychus malabaricus*, three million of which were estimated to be held in Javan households in 2018 (Marshall et al., 2020, *Biological Conservation*, 241, 108237). One taxon, *C. malabaricus nigricauda*, endemic to the Kangean Archipelago off north-east Java, is highly distinctive in size, plumage, behaviour and genomics, and may be a separate species, the Kangean shama (Wu et al., 2022, *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, 39, msac189).

With Cameron Rutt of the American Bird Conservancy, I spent 4 days on Pulau Kangean (the main Kangean island) during 5–8 June 2023 without encountering a single Kangean shama in the archipelago's largest area of forest, mirroring the results of an unsuccessful search in 2010